



How to Spread Positivity by Smiling



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful





Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,

We pray that this message reaches you
in good health and imaan.

On behalf of our AMAU Academy team, we would like
to present to you these compiled notes that we have
prepared to make your journey with us a lot easier.

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May Allah make our paths toward seeking
beneficial knowledge easy and kindle our hearts
with sincerity and gratefulness
towards Him.

Jazakumullahu Khayran



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جل جلاله | Jalla Jalāluhu

Allah the Most Exalted



صلى الله عليه وسلم | Sallāllāhu Alayhi Wa Sallam

Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him



رضي الله عنه | RadiAllahu `anhu

May Allah be pleased with him



رحمه الله | Rahimahullah

May Allah have mercy upon him

What is Smiling?

Chapter One



As a religion that brings about goodness in every aspect of life, Islam does not neglect to give importance to the act of smiling, known as “الابتسامة” (al-Ibtisaamah) in Arabic.

Smiling is valued for its positive effects on both the person who smiles and the recipient of the smile. Many people attest to the comfort, joy, and happiness it brings.

This simple act has profound impacts and is one of the methods used by the Prophet ﷺ to spread the message of Islam.

However, it is also important to note that sometimes a smile can make one nervous or uncertain about a person’s intentions, illustrating that smiling can have various interpretations.

So, what exactly is smiling?

In essence, smiling is a gesture that is less intense than laughing and is considered better than laughing.

When you smile, you are not laughing at someone; rather, it is a gentle and considerate expression.

In Surah An-Naml, Allah ﷻ mentions that Prophet Sulaymaan عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام smiled with joy at the speech of an ant:

1

فَتَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِّن قَوْلِهَا [...]]

So [Sulaymaan] smiled, amused at her speech [...]

Surah An-Naml 19

This type of smile, which carries joy is commonly found among the pious and righteous individuals. Their laughter is often expressed through smiles, not through giggles or loud laughter.

Prophet Sulaiman's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام smile was one of joy, but it did not involve giggling. It was a controlled and joyful expression.

Similarly, if one observes the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the righteous people - such as the Awliyaa’ and the Saliheen - one will find that they often smiled but rarely laughed loudly.

Their form of smiling was used frequently, whereas giggling and loud laughter were avoided. In fact, excessive laughter is considered undesirable in Islam.

In summary, smiling is a simple yet powerful gesture encouraged in Islam. It reflects joy, kindness, and consideration without the excesses of loud laughter. This practice not only fosters positive interactions but also aligns with the behaviour of the Prophet ﷺ and the righteous believers.

Difference Between Smiling and Laughing

Chapter Two

Let us differentiate between smiling, laughing and laughing out loud.

1 "التَّبَسُّمُ" (At-Tabassum)

It refers to a gentle smile without any accompanying sound. It is a quiet expression of joy or amusement.

2 "الضَّحِكُ" (Ad-Dahik)

It involves a slight sound accompanying the laughter, indicating a more pronounced expression of amusement.

3 "القَهْقَهَةُ" (Al-Qahqahah)

It is characterised by loud laughter, where the sound of laughter is quite prominent.

The majority of the expressions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were characterised by at-Tabassum, or gentle smiling.

He greeted people with a warm and open smile, regardless of their background or status. Scholars say that his smile would not easily depart from his face.

‘Abdullah ibn al-Harith رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said about the Prophet ﷺ:

1 مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَكْثَرَ تَبَسُّمًا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.
I have not seen anyone smile more often than the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him.
Sunan at-Tirmidhī 3641

Despite facing numerous challenges and hardships, the Prophet's ﷺ smile remained a constant feature of his character.

His ﷺ smile was not selective; it extended to everyone he encountered. He smiled at the rich and the poor, the young and the old, regardless of their race or social status. This inclusivity reflected the Prophet's ﷺ profound humility and compassion.

A companion, Jareer ibn ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, recounted how the Prophet ﷺ never failed to smile whenever they met, regardless of the time of day:

2 مَا حَجَبَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُنْذُ أَسْلَمْتُ وَلَا رَأَيْتُ إِلَّا تَبَسَّمَ فِي وَجْهِهِ.
Since I embraced Islam Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) never refused to see me and he did not see me but with a smile on his face.
Sahih Muslim 2475b

Reflect on this beautiful hadith:

3 عَنْ سِمَاكِ بْنِ حَرْبٍ، قَالَ قُلْتُ لِحَبِيبِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ كُنْتَ تُجَالِسُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ نَعَمْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ جَلَسَ فِي مُصَلَّاهُ حَتَّى تَطْلُعَ الشَّمْسُ فَيَتَحَدَّثُ أَصْحَابُهُ يَذْكُرُونَ حَدِيثَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَيُنْشِدُونَ الشُّعْرَ وَيَضْحَكُونَ وَيَتَبَسَّمُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

It was narrated that Simak bin Harb said: "I said to Jabir bin Samurah: 'Did you used to sit with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?' He said: 'Yes.' When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had prayed fajr, he would sit in the place where he had prayed until the sun rose, and his companions would talk and remember things from the time of Jahilliyah and recite poetry, and they would laugh and he would smile.'"

Sunan an-Nasa'i 1358

His ﷺ smile was genuine, embodying his inner joy and contentment.

‘Ā’isha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said that while he ﷺ did not indulge in excessive laughter, he was known for his frequent and sincere smiles.

The Prophet ﷺ himself emphasised the importance of smiling in Islam, likening it to an act of charity.

It is reported that he ﷺ said:

4 تَبَسُّمُكَ فِي وَجْهِ أَخِيكَ لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ [...] “Your smiling in the face of your brother is charity [...]"

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 1956

He taught that meeting someone with a smiling face not only spreads happiness but also removes arrogance and fosters humility.

In essence, smiling in Islam is not merely a social gesture; it is a reflection of one's inner disposition and character. By following the example of the Prophet ﷺ and embracing the etiquette of smiling, Muslims can cultivate a spirit of kindness, humility, and joy in their interactions with others.

When It's Hard to Smile

Chapter Three

The Prophet ﷺ exemplified the significance of smiling even in challenging situations.

In moments of anger or frustration, he ﷺ maintained his gentle smile. An incident illustrates this when Ka'b ibn Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ stayed back and did not participate in the Battle of Tabuk.

He narrates what happened when he came to greet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he returned from the battle to Madinah:

1

فَجِئْتُهُ فَلَمَّا سَلَّمْتُ عَلَيْهِ تَبَسَّمَ تَبَسُّمَ الْمُغْضَبِ [...]

Then I came to him, and when I greeted him, he smiled a smile of an angry person [...]

Sahih al-Bukhari 4418

Despite his disappointment, the Prophet's ﷺ smile did not waver as he met Ka'b رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ upon returning to Madinah. Though it was tinged with a little anger, it remained evident.

Furthermore, his ﷺ life was not devoid of moments of light-heartedness. He interacted with people with kindness and warmth, making those around him feel comfortable and valued.

Allah ﷻ describes him ﷺ as being gentle and merciful in his dealings with others, fostering an environment of love and compassion.

Allah ﷻ says:

2

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ [...]

So by mercy from Allāh, [O Muḥammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you [...]

Surah Ali 'Imran 159

The importance of being cheerful and welcoming is evident in a famous incident involving the Prophet ﷺ and 'Abdullah ibn Umm Maktoom رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

One day, 'Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ approached him while he ﷺ was busy giving Da'wah to the leaders of Quraysh.

When 'Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ began speaking during this conversation, the Prophet ﷺ turned all his attention to the Quraysh leader.

In response, Allah ﷻ revealed Surah 'Abasa, highlighting the Prophet's ﷺ reaction and emphasising the significance of showing his companions kindness and warmth, even during busyness or preoccupation.

Allāh ﷻ said:

3

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى

He [i.e., the Prophet (ﷺ)] frowned and turned away.

Surah ‘Abasa 1

This incident serves as a reminder of the Prophet's ﷺ humanity and the importance of maintaining a cheerful demeanour, regardless of external circumstances. Even when engaged in the vital task of conveying the message of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ was required to smile and show kindness to those around him.

Smiling and Laughing With Your Family

Chapter Four

Smiling has its time and place, and it is not always appropriate. Life requires a balance between moments of toughness and moments of gentleness. However, the essence of a person's character should be inclined towards smiling.

The companions of the Prophet ﷺ often experienced a sense of heightened concern for the Hereafter in his presence.

Abu Bakr and Hanzalah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا once expressed how being with the Prophet ﷺ made them feel as if they could see Paradise and Hellfire before their eyes. Yet, when they returned to their families, this heightened awareness would fade. They shared these feelings with the Prophet ﷺ, seeking his guidance.

The Prophet ﷺ reassured them, saying:

1 "وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ إِنْ لَوْ تَدُومُونَ عَلَى مَا تَكُونُونَ عِنْدِي وَفِي الذِّكْرِ لَصَافَحَتْكُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ عَلَى فُرُشِكُمْ وَفِي طُرُقِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَا حَنْظَلَةُ سَاعَةً وَسَاعَةً " . ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ .

“By Him in Whose Hand is my life, if your state of mind remains the same as it is in my presence and you are always busy in remembrance (of Allah), the Angels will shake hands with you in your beds and in your paths but, Hanzala, time (should be devoted to the worldly affairs) and time (should be devoted to prayer and meditation).” He said this thrice.

Sahih Muslim 2750a

This emphasises the importance of fulfilling the rights of one's family by spending time with their spouses and children and engaging in activities that bring joy and laughter.

The Prophet ﷺ taught that there is a time for serious reflection and a time for relaxation and enjoyment.

He ﷺ encouraged his companions to spend quality time with their families, to laugh, joke, and smile, thereby creating a joyful and loving atmosphere at home. This balance is crucial for a harmonious and fulfilling life.

What Are the Benefits of Smiling?

Chapter Five

The Prophet ﷺ was the smartest and bravest person to have ever walked on this earth. Despite the immense responsibilities he carried, he remained a paragon of balanced character.

He ﷺ emphasised the importance of smiling, describing it as an act of charity (Sadaqah).

He said:

1

إِنَّكُمْ لَا تَسْعُونَ النَّاسَ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ لِيَسْعَهُمْ بَسْطُ الْوَجْهِ، وَحُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ

“You (people) cannot satisfy people with your wealth, but satisfy them with your cheerful faces and good morals.”

Abu Ya’la and Al-Hakim

This simple act of smiling can capture hearts and bring people closer to Allah ﷻ. The Prophet’s ﷺ teaching highlights that smiling in the face of a brother is an act of charity, placing happiness in the hearts of others and earning rewards from Allah ﷻ.

He ﷺ stressed the significance of not belittling any good deed, no matter how small. In another hadith, he ﷺ said:

2

" لَا تَحْقِرَنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ شَيْئًا وَلَوْ أَنَّ تَلَقَّى أَخَاكَ بِوَجْهِ طَلْقٍ "

“Don't consider anything insignificant out of good things even if it is that you meet your brother with a cheerful countenance.”

Sahih Muslim 2626

Different Types of Smiling

Chapter Six

In conclusion, it is essential to recognise the various types of smiling and their underlying motivations. Researchers have identified 18 different types of smiles, each conveying distinct emotions and intentions. Among these, some smiles may mask insincerity or carry negative connotations.

One type of smile is mockery, in which a person smiles to ridicule or belittle others. Another is a fake smile, forced and insincere, lacking genuine emotion. Smiles of hypocrisy may disguise ulterior motives or deceit. Similarly, smiles of anger or arrogance may convey hostility rather than warmth.

Conversely, genuine smiles reflect sincerity and good-will, expressing support and positivity. Thus, not every smile indicates honesty or genuine care for others.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL TO DISCERN
THE TRUE INTENTIONS BEHIND A SMILE
BY OBSERVING THE PERSON'S EYES,
BEHAVIOUR, AND TRACK RECORD.**

Ultimately, Allah ﷻ knows best, and we should aim to be sincere and genuine in all our interactions.



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